

Key Points

Survey and Manage

Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Background

In 1994, mitigation measures for approximately 400 rare and little known species were included in the Northwest Forest Plan as the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines. These Standards and Guidelines call for the management of known species sites, site-specific pre-habitat disturbing surveys, and/or landscape level strategic surveys for these rare and little known species.

In 2001, the Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines were revised to better identify management needs, clarify language, eliminate inconsistent or redundant practices, and establish an annual species review process. As a result, approximately 330 of the rare and little known species were included in the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines. Annual species reviews have further reduced the number to 296 species and four arthropod functional groups.

Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)

Under Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final Supplemental EIS (SEIS) to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines the agencies' consider removing or modifying the standards and guidelines for all of the 296 species and four arthropod functional groups. Under Alternative 2, the preferred alternative, 152 of these species will be eligible for inclusion in the agencies' Special Status Species programs while the rest will receive no species-specific management.

The reason for this proposal is to improve the agencies' ability to implement the Northwest Forest Plan which balances healthy forest ecosystem objectives and sustainable commodity production.

The BLM and Forest Service are using valuable public resources to meet the goals of the Northwest Forest Plan. The agencies have spent millions of dollars and years of effort looking for rare species. No new sites have been found for over 100 of these species. The resources used for Survey and Manage could instead be applied to forest health projects such as hazardous fuel reduction and restoration projects. These projects are designed to restore and protect late-successional habitat.

The agencies remain concerned about the management of rare species that may be dependent on late-successional and old-growth habitat. Survey and Manage is not the only protection for rare species. The agencies' Special Status Species Programs identify species that could be at risk and provide for management to reduce the risk of the species being listed under the Endangered Species Act. In addition, 86 percent (6.9 million acres) of the late-successional and old-growth forests are reserved by the Northwest Forest Plan.

The Final SEIS Analyzes Three Alternatives:

- **Alternative 1** would maintain the Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines currently in place for the 296 species and 4 arthropod functional groups.
- **Alternative 2, the preferred alternative**, would remove the Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines and instead manage rare and little known species under the BLM and Forest Service Special Status Species policies. Not all species would qualify for inclusion into the Special Status Species programs. As a result, 57 species may have habitat insufficient to support stable populations in all or part of their ranges in the Northwest Forest Plan area.
- **Alternative 3** would continue Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines for the 272 species categorized as rare. The 24 species categorized as uncommon would be considered for inclusion

in the agencies Special Status Species programs. However, not all species would qualify in all or a part of their range. As a result, 10 species may have insufficient habitat to support stable populations in all or part of their ranges in the Northwest Forest Plan area.

Differences Between Draft and Final SEIS:

- The Final SEIS was developed to respond to over 5,000 comments received on the Draft SEIS.
- Based on public comments on the Draft SEIS, the wording used to describe outcomes was changed from “risk of extirpation” to “sufficiency of habitat to support stable populations.” This wording is consistent with the wording used in the 2000 Survey and Manage Final SEIS.
- The mitigation component of Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 in the Final SEIS has changed as a result of comments received on the Draft SEIS. Mitigation is intended to reduce impacts to those species that would not be included in the Special Status Species Programs. Mitigation involves conducting pre-project “surveys” and managing found sites for species. Unlike the Draft SEIS, there are now three identified categories for mitigation: Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3.
 - **Category 1:** In Category 1 there may be insufficient habitat to support populations under all the alternatives (due to factors beyond our control such as air pollution and land ownership patterns). In this category, mitigation would reduce differences between the alternatives in the SEIS, however, under all three alternatives; the species habitat would still not be secure.
 - **Category 2:** In Category 2, there may be insufficient information to determine an outcome for the species habitat under all of the alternatives. In this category, mitigation would reduce differences between the alternatives in the SEIS, however, under all three alternatives; there would still be insufficient information.
 - **Category 3:** In Category 3, there is insufficient habitat under the action alternatives while under the no-action alternative there is sufficient habitat. Mitigation would eliminate these adverse affects.